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The Benedictus in F opens with the first thought of the minuet in *Don Giovanni*, and it is curious to observe how it turns off. This piece for a quartet of solo voices and chorus is much too long, and the solos constructed for the display of the compass and florid execution of the singers would now be thought intolerably tedious. They are mere solfeggi in the old Italian taste, made to conciliate the Italian singers, who were the first performers of this work. Mozart gratifies his German orchestra with more success. This solo passage for the first oboe is extremely elegant:



The Agnus Dei, in C minor, has a slight correspondence in style with the Qui tollis. It is a chorus in which the voices principally accompany the orchestra, and solos for the violoncellos and first violins, have alternate prominence. The instrumental effects are very agreeable, but Mozart did not put out much power in their construction. It is curious that this Mass does not end in the key in which it began. The last movement in C, $\frac{2}{4}$, Dona nobis, is remarkable for brilliancy and originality. Though light, and in perpetual motion in its accompaniments, it bears the stamp of creative mind. It resumes, in a new time, the crescendo, the unison, the syncopated phrase of the Gloria, and blends all that had been before heard with something new, binding together and completing the whole. The accompaniments sometimes career about in double scales with extraordinary activity, and in a manner which the utmost latitude of rejoicing in a great Catholic festival can alone reconcile us to in Church music. Yet this brilliant climax is in keeping with what has gone before, and is the proper conclusion of the musical design.

The internal evidence of the 12th Mass makes us unhesitatingly assign it to the year 1778, when Mozart was seeking to obtain an appointment in the Ducal chapel at Mannheim. It agrees in all circumstances with what is known of that period—the advanced state of the Mannheim orchestra, the Italian taste of the solo singers there engaged, and the history of an epoch in the art when an important change could only be introduced into music by paying some homage to tradition, and not overthrowing the established system at once. Of the manner in which this was done, the work remains a monument. The immense variety of effects, combinations, and contrasts capable of being brought within the scope of the modern orchestra and chorus, could hardly have been represented in a work less extensive, which had not only to please the solo singers in their own way, but to open new prospects of pleasure in the art, and to show from whose

pen they might be expected. Produced under these difficult conditions, the pen hurried, and the composer evidently desirous of reaching the end of his work, we may well compound for some redundancies in it, and wonder to find musical pleasure so long and so well sustained.

For the young composer himself, at the age of 22, the work, as it regarded influence on his own fortune or position, was a failure. Can it really have been that such pure and natural melodies were fifty years in advance of their first audience? Was the magnificent patronage of the century solely lavished on executing artists, and denied to any composer, not a professed imitator, walking reverentially in the old ways? The traditions of the first reception of the work are lost. Here at least we know that within thirty years it has been more liked than any Mass—that its simple unpretending style attains by common consent the *beau idéal* of graceful simplicity, and that nothing continues more to extend the circles of those who love and practice music.

Of the Mannheim sojourn of the youthful Mozart much remains to be told could we only summon credible witnesses. He wrote at this time under the influence of friendship, and of the softer feelings incident to his years, some of his best things. We see by the bassoon and oboe parts of the Mass that he was on the best terms with the wind instrument players. A quartet for the flute, and another for the oboe, with stringed instruments written at this period for particular players, offered them higher proof of his estimation; while the slow movements of his sonatas for the Piano and Violin are in the greatest esteem for their sentimental beauty. His health was already delicate. He is said as early as 1778 to have suffered from an affection of the chest, complicated with a nervous malady that caused him hours of deep dejection.

(To be continued.)

CHOIR AND CHORUS SINGING.

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38. After the rhythmical exercises of note against note, in which the strength of sound is sought to be diminished by degrees, according to the skill which the singers may have attained, they should go on to the study of unrhythmical music, in which the aim will be to preserve perfect equality in the most absolute *piano*. It is, doubtless, seldom that the spirit of a composition requires such a mode of execution, but still this may occur. Besides, we must not forget that we are treating of a study, and that a Choir or Chorus will only be able to perform that well occasionally and for a short time, which it has studied in a regular and continuous manner. The example I give here, is founded on the system of ancient music, of the style of fugue and imitation:—

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1st Treble. *Sempre Piano.*

2nd Treble. *Sempre Piano.*

Tenor. *Sempre Piano.*

Bass. *Sempre Piano.*

The compositions of Palestrina and other old masters may be studied in the same manner, before care is taken to put in the shadings; it is only after having made the trial that the difficulties can be understood of giving them in an absolute "*piano*."

39. To sing loud, with the full chest voice, is not less rare among chorus singers, than to sing with true sweetness, for they are just as averse to the trouble and fatigue caused by a powerful emission of the voice, as to the care required in singing *piano*. It is almost always with negligence, and without any fixed purpose of interpreting the music well, that they throw out sounds which are neither absolutely loud, nor absolutely soft; whence result the uncertain effects which annihilate the intention of the composer.

If a Director of Music requires power, and succeeds in drawing the singers out of their apathy for a moment, then they will give out shouts which do not propagate the veritable sound. Almost always taking

lower sounds at the commencement of the notes by an effort of the chest, the sounds of these notes do not come to the ear with purity; they are preceded by an intonation of a fifth, or fourth, or third below which leads to them, whereas they should always be struck at once. The effect of which I speak comes thus upon the ear:—

instead of—

In the practice of loud singing, the Director of a Choir or Chorus should watch that this bad effect be not produced, and should require the singers to give out the sounds freely and fully. The absolute *forte* and that of the greatest intensity possible, can only be attained by degrees, as the *piano*; for study alone can teach singers to give their notes all the force of which their vocal organ is capable.

(To be continued.)